

**Amendments to the Claims:**

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1-6. (Canceled)

7. (Previously Presented) A process for producing a metal oxide particle having a core where the total molar number of alumina and silica is larger than the molar number of ceria, and a surface layer where the molar number of ceria is larger than the total molar number of alumina and silica, said process comprising:

preparing a solution containing a ceria sol and a sol of at least either one of alumina and silica, wherein the isoelectric point of the ceria sol differs more than 3.5 from that of said at least one of alumina and silica sol,

adjusting the pH of said solution to be closer to the isoelectric point of the sol of at least either one of alumina and silica than to the isoelectric point of the ceria sol, and to fall within and  $\pm 2.0$  of the isoelectric point of alumina and/or silica sol, and

aggregating the sol from said solution to produce an aggregate.

8. (Canceled)

9. (New) The process according to claim 7, wherein the molar ratio of (Al+Si):Ce in the metal oxide particle is from 1:0.5 to 0.5:1.

10. (New) The process according to claim 7, wherein the pH of said solution is adjusted to be closer to the isoelectric point of the sol of at least either one of alumina and silica than to the isoelectric point of the ceria sol, and to fall within  $\pm 0.5$  of the isoelectric point of alumina and/or silica sol.

11. (New) A process for producing an exhaust gas purifying catalyst, wherein the process comprises producing a metal oxide particle by the process according to claim 7, and then loading a noble metal on said metal oxide particle.